

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by the Chairman, Mr. Carpender, and the following members were present:

Mr. Richard Carpender, Chair
Mrs. Marge Levesque, Clerk

Mr. Michael Buddemeyer

Ms. Angela Volpicelli
Mrs. Cynthia Perrotti

Also Present: Asst. Supt. Jermain, Mark Dunham, Patti Cofield, and Daniel Klemmer

Absent: Dr. Lusi, Ms. Sylvia Wedge, Mrs. Marilyn King

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exceptions (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

Public Session recessed at 6:50 PM and resumed at 7:05 PM.

1. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

- Dave Abbott, Assistant Commissioner of education, will talk about the new BEP at the Joint School Committee meeting on March 1st. The Joint Committee plans to invite the Tiverton, Little Compton, and Jamestown School Committees to attend.
- A Finance Subcommittee meeting will be held on the February 22nd at 5:00 PM in the Planning Board Room at the Town Hall. At 6:30 PM, the School Committee will meet with the Town Council to discuss the budget.
- Dr. Lusi is away at the AASA Conference in Phoenix, Arizona; Mrs. King had business to attend to; and Ms. Wedge is away on personal business this evening.
- An Executive Session was held prior to this meeting under R.I. Law 42-46-5, Exception (a)(1) Job Performance/Personnel Matters. No motions were made, and no were votes taken. A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Levesque and was seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted.

2. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT** Absent

a) **Teaching and Learning:**

- PHS Junior, Jeff Blanchette placed second in a contest sponsored by the English Speaking Union. Jeff performed Bottom's monologue from A Midsummer's Night's Dream and Sonnet #1.
- There will be no school on Wednesday due to the impending snow storm. There will also be no school for students on Friday because in order to conduct parent-teacher conferences as well as teacher professional development.
- The Town Council scheduled a meeting with the School Committee on Monday, February 22nd, at 6:30 PM, to discuss the budget.

b) Finance and Operations: No report.

c) High School Liaison:

- Daniel Klemmer reported that the H1N1 clinic for 18-25 year olds was taking place that night in the new gym.
- Winter vacation is next week. Twenty students in the Ski and Snowboard Club are going to Utah over the break for a 5-day trip.
- The Freshmen basketball team won their semi-final game, and they will be competing against North Providence in the Championship game.
- The girls' swimming team won their second straight Division 3 championship.

3. STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

a) **Robotics Competition – PMS.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to commend the following members of Portsmouth Middle School's Robotics team for their achievement in the RI FIRST Lego League Smart Move Robotics Competition held at Roger Williams University on January 9, 2010. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

Max Bliss

Christopher Lord

Gretchen Petrie

Daniel Donnelly

Christopher Norton

Kyle Wentzel

Tyler Fleig

Nicholas Norton

Jacob Hullings

b) **RIMEA's All-State and Honors Festivals – PMS.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to commend the following Portsmouth Middle School students for being selected to the Rhode Island Music Educators Association All-State and Honors Festivals. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

Laura Blanchette – Honors Band

Andreas Evangelatos – Honors Chorus

Nicholas Paruta – Honors Band

Jillian Zappala – Honors Chorus

Samuel Boswell – All-State Orchestra

Maxwell McGaw – Honors Band

Mark Tennenbaum – All-State Band

c) **Haiti Relief Fundraiser – PMS.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to commend the following PMS students for their efforts in the Haiti Relief Fundraiser: Hannah Taylor and Kristin Walker. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to approve the minutes of the meeting held January 26, 2010. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

- a) **General School Aide Resignation.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee accepts the resignation of Melanie A. Bulpett, from the position of General School Aide at Hathaway School, effective January 29, 2010.”
- b) **Clerical Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee accepts the resignation for retirement of Anne Jenkins, from the position of Elementary Library Media Clerk, Category B, effective with the last day of the 2009-10 school year.”
- c) **Teacher Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee acknowledges the resignation for retirement of Mary F. Dufour, Grade 2 Teacher at Hathaway School, effective with the last day of the 2009-10 school year.”
- d) **Principal Retirement.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the School Committee acknowledges the resignation for retirement of Dr. Christina M. Martin, Hathaway School Principal, effective with the last day of the 2009-10 school year.”
- e) **Appt. – General School Aide, Hathaway.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee affirms the Superintendent’s appointment, Recommendation #1-2/9/10, to the position of General School Aide at Hathaway School, effective immediately.”
- f) **Request for Leave of Absence.** The Superintendent recommends adoption of the following resolution, “that the Committee approves the request for Family and Medical Leave in accordance with the backup information.”

A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque and was seconded by Ms. Volpicelli to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. So voted 5-0. Asst. Supt. Jermain announced the appointment of Cathy Anderson to the position of General School Aide at Hathaway School, and she thanked the retirees for their years of service to the Portsmouth School Department.

6. **PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

7. **BUSINESS AGENDA**

- a) **Non-Renewals/Displacements/Terminations:** Assistant Superintendent Jermain explained that Rhode Island law requires that the School Department notifies teachers of the non-renewal of their contracts for the ensuing year by March 1st. As a result, letters were sent to those teachers listed in the backup regarding the intent to recommend to the School Committee the nonrenewal of their contracts for next year. A copy of that list was also provided to the teachers' union representatives. Hopefully, the School Department can rescind many of these non-renewals once the budget process is completed. However, in order to comply with Rhode Island law, the School Committee must take action at this meeting. Please note that the Administration worked with the Union to adopt a less formal non-renewal process than we have used in the past. Pursuant to Rhode Island law, in order to protect the confidentiality of our non-renewed teachers, the names of the teachers will not be reported until actual termination; they will be reported out in the form of numerical designations at this time. In addition, the non-renewals will be bundled together based upon the reason for their non-renewals. The recommendation will be read into the record. If anyone desires to be heard on this issue, they should address the Committee after the Committee has made a motion on the recommendations. Mr. Carpenter stated that comment will be allowed at the end, but no identifiable criteria will be allowed.
- 1) **Substitute Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the long-term assignments of Substitute Teachers 1, 2, 3, and 4, formally end following the completion of their current placement with the Portsmouth School Department. The specific reason for this recommendation is that these substitutes have not been appointed to the position by the School Committee and thus are not eligible for continuous employment and rights of recall. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.
- 2) **Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the teaching contracts of Teachers 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9, not be renewed on June 21, 2010, or the last day of the 2009-10 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that these teachers were appointed to a position for less than the equivalent of 135 full days, which does not entitle them to seniority or rights of recall. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.
- 3) **Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the teaching contract of Teacher 10, not be renewed on June 21, 2010, or the last day of the 2009-10 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that this teacher was appointed to fill a 1-year position. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

- 4) **Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the teaching contract of Teachers 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27, not be renewed on June 21, 2010, or the last day of the 2009-10 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department's 2010-11 budget. If there is a reduction, the School Committee will have to reorganize programs, eliminate positions, and consolidate classrooms in order to operate within the total budget allocation for school operations. As a result of this reorganization and consolidation, these positions may be eliminated or senior teachers may opt for a position in these areas of certification. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. Elizabeth Carter Patterson, teaching in PSD for 15 years in Computer Science Department. Mr. Carpender stopped her from reading her statement about the elimination of the PHS computer science department. She can only discuss her own position. Ms. Patterson stated that she is greatly disturbed that her position is being eliminated. She handed out a resolution in the House of Representatives and read from it. She hopes that this Committee will side with the HOR resolution and not offer less but more computer science opportunities at every level. So voted 5-0.
- 5) **Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the teaching contract of Teachers 28, 29, 30, 31, and 32, not be renewed on June 21, 2010, or the last day of the 2009-10 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that the current programs in which these teachers are teaching may be reconstituted and/or eliminated beginning with the 2010-11 academic year to improve the educational efficacy of programmatic offerings for Portsmouth students. As a result of this reconstitution or elimination, these positions may be eliminated. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.
- 6) **Teacher Non-Renewals.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the teaching contract of Teacher 33 not be renewed on June 21, 2010, or the last day of the 2009-10 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is due to the uncertainty of Federal, State, and local funds in support of the School Department's 2010-11 budget. If there is a reduction, the School Committee will have to reorganize programs, eliminate positions, and consolidate classrooms in order to operate within the total budget allocation for school operations. In addition, the current program in which this teacher is teaching may be reconstituted and/or eliminated beginning with the 2010-11 academic year to improve the educational efficacy of programmatic offerings for Portsmouth students. As a result of this reconstitution or elimination, this position may be eliminated. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.
- 7) **Teacher Displacements.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque that the teaching contract of Teachers 34, 35, and 36, be eliminated on June 21, 2010, or the last day of the 2009-10 school year. The specific reason for this recommendation is that the

current programs in which these teachers are teaching may be reconstituted and/or eliminated beginning with the 2010-11 academic year to improve the educational efficacy of programmatic offerings for Portsmouth students. As a result of this reconstitution or elimination, these teachers will be displaced and will be placed on the involuntary transfer list to retain rights to their current position. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

- b) **Report on PMS Advisory.** Mr. Amaral and Ms. Homen gave a Powerpoint presentation on the new Advisory Program at Portsmouth Middle School. Ms. Homen distributed an information pamphlet that is given to the incoming 6th grade students.
- c) **Acceptance of Gym Equipment Donation.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to accept the gym equipment donation from the St. Barnabas Catholic Athletic League -- two sets of portable bleachers for PMS at \$2,000, and a basketball practice gun for PHS at \$6,000. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.
- d) **Discussion/Action – Facilities Plan.** Mr. Carpender stated that a workshop on the Facilities Plan was held last week, with the intention of voting on it this week in order to begin the process with RIDE. Mr. Buddemeyer stated that based on our conversations over the last few months and conversations with RGB, he feels it is the will of the Committee and the public to move forward with Option 3. He stated that we are not committing to a dollar amount at this time. We have cost estimates based on an architectural study; and in Stage 2, more exact numbers will be determined. There is also reimbursement from the state and reimbursement for conversions to green schools. It is ultimately RIDE's decision as to which plan we move forward with. Mr. Buddemeyer made a motion to approve Facilities Subcommittee Option 3 as the first choice and Option 2 as the second choice for the Stage 1 application to RIDE. Seconded by Ms. Levesque. Mr. Carpender explained the difference between Options 2 and 3. Much discussion took place. He announced that Ms. Wedge and Mrs. King sent him an email stating their opinion on this item, recognizing that it does not count as a vote. Ms. Wedge supports Option 3, with Option 2 as an alternate. Mrs. King is in favor of Option 3 modified -- closing Elmhurst, moving 5th graders back to PMS, and only doing the necessary repairs to Melville and Hathaway. The motion was approved by a 3-2 vote. Mrs. Perrotti and Ms. Volpicelli were opposed.
- e) **Approval of December Financials.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to approve the December financials as presented. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.
- f) **Budget Transfer.** A motion was made by Mrs. Levesque to approve the budget transfer in accordance with the backup information provided. Seconded by Ms. Volpicelli. So voted 5-0.

8. **SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

- a) **Facilities.** No further report.
- b) **Finance.** Mr. Buddemeyer stated that the first Finance Subcommittee meeting was held last evening. The next meeting will be held on February 22nd at 5:00 PM at the Town Hall.
- c) **Health and Wellness.** Ms. Volpicelli announced that the next meeting will be held on March 1st.
- d) **Policy.** Absent.

A motion was made by Ms. Wedge and seconded by Mrs. Levesque to adjourn the meeting. So voted 7-0. The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Patti Cofield
Recording Secretary for:

Mrs. Marjorie Levesque, Clerk